

Braille Monitor



MARCH, 1974

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

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If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.



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NAC BOARD HOLDS WINTER MEETING

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
OF ARKANSAS,
Little Rock, Arkansas, December 21, 1973.

Senator J. W. FULBRIGHT,
*United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR FULBRIGHT: Attached please find a joint report of the midyear meeting of the Board of Directors of NAC. Let me take this opportunity to make some brief statements about the actions of the board of directors which are reported in detail in the joint report.

It should be noted that NAC officials were very careful to make it clear that the National Federation of the Blind was not permitted to have observers at the midyear meeting of the board of directors. Mr. Taylor and I were admitted only as representatives of Congressman Scherle of Iowa.

No public mention was ever made of the number of other Congressmen and Senators who had contacted NAC to insure that observers were present. It will be interesting to see if NAC officials now try to claim that the National Federation of the Blind was permitted observers.

There seemed to be an effort by NAC officials to avoid bringing all relevant information to the attention of the board members. For example, both Alexander Handel, the executive director of NAC, and Daniel Robinson, the board president, in their reports told the members of the board of positive steps in favor of NAC. They did not inform them of any of the substantial

developments which show the increasing discontent with NAC among both the organizations of the blind and agencies serving the blind.

As noted throughout the report, virtually every vote of the board of directors was based on minutes of previous meetings, or reports of committees, which were mailed out in advance of the board meeting and not read at the meeting. When we requested copies of these materials, we were told by board president Dan Robinson that it would have to be considered—that such action might “cause problems.”

This factor is particularly important in analyzing the board's decision to permit “a representative of any national organization of the blind” to attend future board meetings. Without the minutes and reports, no observer could have much of an awareness of what policies or actions are being voted on in board meetings. The intentions of the board of directors must also be questioned. If they were sincerely interested in opening the board meetings to observers, certainly they should consider making copies of minutes and reports discussed in the meeting, available to observers.

Perhaps the motive in deciding to permit “a representative” at future meetings was simply to respond to pressures from congressional offices. But without also making the minutes and reports available, they have acted in bad faith.

Also, both the board of directors and NAC officials totally refused to discuss

meaningful reform of NAC's structure and method of operation.

Respectfully submitted,

RALPH W. SANDERS,
*President,
National Federation of the Blind
of Arkansas.*

NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND OF IOWA,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 7, 1974.

Representative WILLIAM SCHERLE,
*United States House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SCHERLE: Attached please find a report of the NAC Board meeting in New York on December 12 and 13. Ralph Sanders and I were admitted to the NAC Board meeting as your representatives, and the organized blind are deeply appreciative of your helpfulness and cooperation. You will note from the attached report submitted jointly by Ralph Sanders and me that the matters considered at the NAC Board meeting are not of such a nature as to require the closed door secrecy which seems to be important to NAC.

This is the third NAC Board meeting at which I have been an observer. It was essentially the same as the earlier two. At the first two meetings which I observed, I was admitted as a representative of the largest organization of blind consumers in the country. At the latter meeting I was admitted, along with Ralph Sanders, as your representative.

The final action taken by the NAC Board

of Directors at this meeting concerned itself with approval of a provision indicating that in the future a representative of a national organization of the blind will be admitted as an observer, except for executive sessions. I have known several members of the NAC Board for a number of years, and I have met casually with virtually all of them. As a group, they exaggerate greatly the need for confidentiality and the importance of the decisions taken at the meetings themselves. All decisions were unanimous.

As you can observe from reading the attached report, NAC is concerned about the criticisms of its policies and practices but it is not yet ready to recognize the values which can be derived from direct consumer input and involvement. The Department of Agriculture wouldn't dare treat farmers the way NAC treats blind people. Moreover, if it attempted to do so, any such attempt would be publicly lambasted and put down quickly. Any such attempt would be politically intolerable.

The time has come when NAC must recognize its responsibility to the blind consumers of the services it attempts to standardize and regulate, and the time has come when it must recognize the value of conducting its affairs in an open and aboveboard manner. I believe that the Federal Government should not fund an activity with such a poor relationship to its clientele groups, and I believe that the general public will not support indefinitely an organization which treats its clientele group as inferior, incompetent, second-class citizens.

If you have further questions regarding this report, or if I may be helpful in any

way, please let me hear from you. The organized blind appreciate your efforts on our behalf.

Yours very cordially,

JOHN N. TAYLOR.

**REPORT ON
NAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

For months prior to the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC), organizations of blind individuals vitally concerned over NAC's impact on their lives had attempted to learn the time and place of NAC's fall board meeting. Numerous letters had been written to NAC asking that silent consumer-group representatives be admitted as observers at the board meetings, but in general these inquiries were evaded.

The National Federation of the Blind designated Ralph Sanders of Little Rock, Arkansas, and John Taylor of Des Moines, Iowa, as its official observers of the NAC Board meetings and sought to secure agreement with NAC that they would be admitted. On December 12 both Ralph Sanders and John Taylor were in New York, although NAC had not indicated any intention of admitting them as observers to their board of directors meeting. Immediately preceding the NAC Board of Directors meeting, many Members of Congress had made strong representations that the largest organization of blind consumers in the country should have observers at the NAC meetings and a meaningful opportunity for direct input into NAC deliberations and decisions.

Congressman William Scherle of Iowa and other Senators and Representatives advised NAC that they had designated Ralph Sanders and John Taylor as their representatives and requested that both be admitted to the NAC Board meetings. NAC advised Members of Congress that Messrs. Sanders and Taylor would be admitted to the meetings representing congressional interests but not consumers.

The National Federation of the Blind held a press conference at the Prince George Hotel on the afternoon of December 12. NAC representatives came to the press conference and were invited to attend since the National Federation of the Blind conducts its affairs openly rather than secretly. After some conversation with news media representatives, one of them asked the NAC representatives if Messrs. Sanders and Taylor would be admitted to the board meetings and one of them replied in the affirmative. However, he emphasized that their admission was on behalf of the congressional offices rather than to represent or present the views of blind consumers.

Late in the afternoon of December 12, the staff at the Prince George Hotel declined to apprise Messrs. Sanders and Taylor of the time and place of the NAC Board of Directors dinner scheduled for that evening, indicating that NAC did not wish this information known. No information regarding the NAC Board of Directors dinner on the evening of the 12th nor the formal board of directors meeting on the 13th was posted on the hotel bulletin board. Just before 5 p.m., John Taylor contacted the NAC office and learned from Miss Anne New that the NAC Board of Directors dinner that evening would commence at 6:30 p.m. in the

Regency Room of the Prince George Hotel and that the meeting would be held in the Williamsburg Room on the morning of the 13th. Miss New indicated that NAC had not contacted Messrs. Sanders and Taylor regarding time and place of meetings because it expected the congressional offices to provide them with this information. Since Messrs. Sanders and Taylor were registered in the hotel, and since NAC officials were in and out of the hotel on several occasions during the afternoon, it would have been courteous had they apprised Messrs. Sanders and Taylor of the time and place of board activities at which they had been approved to represent congressional interests.

The board of directors dinner convened at approximately seven o'clock on the evening of December 12 at the Prince George Hotel. Following the dinner there was a brief program which included introduction of some new board members, wives, and Messrs. Sanders and Taylor as representatives of Congressman William Scherle. President Dan Robinson then called for motions to approve the minutes of the NAC Board of Directors meeting of June 21, 1973, as mailed, the minutes of the executive committee meeting of July 18 as mailed, and the minutes of the November 14 meeting of the executive committee, as mailed. All were approved unanimously, but copies were not made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor. Louis Rives presented a brief report of the awards committee and the dinner meeting recessed at approximately 8:30 p.m.

The NAC Board of Directors reconvened at approximately 9:20 a.m. December 13 in the Williamsburg Room, and President Robinson announced that the dinner meeting last evening, as well as this

meeting, would be taped. President Robinson also indicated that Messrs. Sanders and Taylor were present, representing Congressman William Scherle, and that another congressional office representative was expected shortly.

The first item of business on the morning program dealt with a report of the executive director, Mr. Handel. This report cited several instances in which NAC had been mentioned in speeches and publications as evidence of NAC's recognition as a significant accreditation body. He made reference to a NAC endorsement by the New York Federation of Workers for the Blind, as well as mention of NAC at AAWB sectional meetings in Cleveland last summer. He even mentioned references to NAC found in an address made by Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, but failed to note that these references were critical. He also failed to note that the Ohio Chapter of the American Association of Workers for the Blind had overwhelmingly rejected a motion to endorse NAC. It was obvious that the executive director was apprising the board of favorable responses to NAC but failing to acquaint it with unfavorable views. This report further commended the awards committee for its choice of Mr. Ken Cozier to receive the volunteers award and Mr. Art Johnson to receive the professional award. The executive director also indicated that NAC had contacted forty-seven accredited agencies, soliciting names and addresses of users of their services who might be contacted by NAC to ascertain the level of consumer approval. He reported that twenty-eight such agencies had responded, supplying the names of approximately 115 people who could be contacted as references for them.

He indicated that this was in accordance with a policy established at the July 18, 1973, meeting of the NAC Executive Committee and that the committee had established procedures to document criticisms of NAC, as well as criticisms of its standards and accreditation procedures. This report was concluded at approximately 9:35 a.m.

Mr. Morton Pepper, chairman of the program support committee, then reported on the recent activities of his group. He indicated that NAC had income of approximately \$37,000 for the first four months of this year from dues and private sources and anticipated a total of \$60,000 for the full year. Mr. Pepper reported that the NAC budget for the coming year would be approximately \$317,000 and that it anticipated an income of approximately \$29,000 from dues and accreditation payments, leaving a balance to be raised of approximately \$287,000. He further indicated that NAC anticipated meeting this goal with substantial help from grant sources. This report was concluded and accepted at approximately 9:45 a.m., and President Robinson then introduced Mr. Fritz Mulhauser, representing the office of Congressman John Brademas of Indiana. Board member John May then suggested that NAC contact the *Foundation News*, a trade journal in the field, and seek favorable mention of its needs and activities. It was agreed that NAC would contact this source of favorable publicity.

Mr. John Ferree reported for Warren Thompson, personnel committee chairman, who was absent. Mr. Ferree referred to a committee report which had been mailed to members and to other decisions reached at the November 14 meeting of the executive committee. He reported that the

NAC staff will receive a four-percent cost-of-living raise as of January 1, 1974, as well as plans to provide at NAC's expense an annual health examination. He also reported that a new policy provided that NAC will pay for a health examination of new employees prior to entry on the job. Mr. Ferree's report, including personnel manual changes, was approved as mailed. This information was not made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor.

At approximately 10:05 a.m. Mrs. Claire Carlson presented the treasurer's report and summarized it as mailed. In summarizing current status, Mrs. Carlson reported that NAC had spent \$242,000 through November 30 and anticipated spending a total of \$263,000 this year. She reported that NAC's budget for the first six months of 1974 will be \$158,500 with anticipated expenditures of \$151,800. The difference between these figures, if realized, would become a part of NAC's approximately \$100,000 reserve fund. Beginning next July, NAC's budget year will be July 1 through June 30. After considerable discussion of budgetary changes and income prospects, and the need to avoid self-dealing, the treasurer's report was approved as mailed. This report was not made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor. The meeting recessed for approximately fifteen minutes.

At approximately 11:10 a.m. Dr. Geraldine Scholl reported for NAC's Commission on Standards. Dr. Scholl called particular attention to exhibit B of this commission's report and after some discussion this report was adopted as mailed to board members. Copies were not made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor. It was suggested that \$148,000 could be used to develop standards for

services to older blind persons or that \$72,000 could be used to develop standards for services to very young blind persons. It was also suggested that two other areas in need of development of new standards were low-vision aid services and services to prevent blindness. This report was concluded at approximately 11:45 a.m.

Board member Dr. Jack Birch then reported for the Commission on Accreditation and indicated that the commission expects to act on approximately seven new applications for accreditation this year and to consider renewal of four applications which are expiring. This report was concluded by its adoption as mailed to board members. Copies were not made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor.

At this point a copy of the environmental assumptions referred to in long-range planning had been secured from the NAC office nearby. There occurred some general discussion regarding these assumptions, but they were not read or otherwise made available to the group.

Under old and new business, McAllister Upshaw, who had originally chaired the committee which proposed a resolution on openness which barred observers at board meetings, reported that considerable thought had been given to a revision of the latter portion of this resolution. He proposed that the resolution be amended to provide that one observer from a national organization of the blind be permitted to attend all NAC Board meetings. Mr. Upshaw stated that a number of environmental assumptions were involved in arriving at the decision to change NAC's policies and indicated that

he had discussed these decisions privately with a number of board members. After some discussion it was agreed that Mr. Upshaw's motion would be revised to provide that one observer from a national organization of the blind be permitted to attend all NAC Board meetings, except executive sessions.

President Dan Robinson observed that this change in policy would not meet consumer dissatisfaction with NAC, but rather it would be regarded as a sign of weakness. He indicated, and properly so, that consumer groups are concerned with substantial changes in NAC which afford meaningful opportunities for consumer input. He seemed concerned that consumer groups would regard the change as a sign of weakness resulting from strong congressional pressures. One other board member expressed the hope that the phrase "except executive sessions" would not be used as a means of avoiding consumer representation. Mr. Upshaw's amendment to the resolution as revised was adopted unanimously.

With the conclusion of all other business, President Robinson invited John Taylor to make a brief statement to the board. Mr. Taylor directed the board's attention to the widespread efforts at all levels of government to afford increased opportunity for consumer involvement and to promote the right of consumers to access to policies and procedures which have a direct impact upon them. He suggested that Congress is concerned that the field of work with blind persons divest itself of custodial and repressive attitudes and develop a relationship of mutual understanding and support with clientele groups. He suggested that the trend in our society is toward increased consumer

involvement, especially in the welfare and human services field, and challenged NAC to provide some leadership in this direction rather than be dragged kicking and screaming into the last quarter of the twentieth century. He also requested that copies of minutes of the June 21 board of directors meeting, the July 18 executive committee meeting, the November 14 executive committee meeting, the December 12 and 13 board of directors meeting, as well as the magnetic tape recordings of the board meetings of December 12 and 13, and all committee and commission written reports be made available to Messrs. Sanders and Taylor.

President Robinson then invited Ralph Sanders to comment briefly. Mr. Sanders directed the board's attention to strong congressional and public concern that organizations spending substantial sums of public money have a responsibility to the public and to consumers of their services with which they have a relationship. He suggested that many Members of Congress are concerned that there has not been meaningful dialogue between NAC and consumer groups even though the National Federation of the Blind frequently has offered to meet with NAC representatives. Mr. Sanders concluded his remarks by pointing to the need for progress toward resolution of differences between blind consumer groups on the one hand and NAC and the small group of agencies it has accredited on the other. Consumer involvement, he observed, is essential in the development of a partnership between those who provide and those who receive services which are truly designed to help blind persons.

The meeting concluded with President Robinson inviting Mr. Fritz Mulhauser to

comment. Mr. Mulhauser thanked NAC for the opportunity to attend its board meeting on behalf of Congressman John Brademas.

Just prior to adjournment of the board meeting at approximately 12:45 p.m. one member of the NAC Board asked that Messrs. Sanders and Taylor convey to Congressman Scherle their request that all national organizations for the blind make their financial statements public.

Respectfully submitted,

RALPH SANDERS.
JOHN TAYLOR.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 16, 1974.

Mr. DANIEL D. ROBINSON,
*President, National Accreditation
Council for Agencies Serving the
Blind and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.*

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: You did not reply to my letter of December 4, 1973. Under the circumstances perhaps this was to have been expected. In any case your December 12-13 meeting in New York has now come and gone, making a reply irrelevant. It is my understanding that you refused to admit observers from the National Federation of the Blind to that meeting but that you did admit the people who would have been our observers if we had been allowed any, calling them instead representatives of various Congressmen and Senators. The technicality is yours, not mine. Therefore, I assume you are willing to live with it and admit that you excluded

NFB representatives from your meeting. The so-called “congressional” representatives who attended your meeting report that a resolution was passed to the effect that a “representative of a national organization” would be admitted to future NAC Board meetings. They further report that you opined that this would not satisfy the wicked malcontents of the National Federation of the Blind but would only encourage them to say that NAC was showing weakness and making concessions under pressure.

You are, of course, right. In the past (by one means or another) we have prodded you into admitting two Federation observers to each of your board meetings—tokenism of the most blatant form: especially so since the observers were rarely allowed to speak and were not shown relevant documents to allow them to know what was being discussed. You have now voted to permit “one” observer. We are not likely to accept the notion that half a token is better than none at all.

NAC still remains unreformed and still refuses even to admit that a problem exists. It answers every charge with name-calling and vilification. In the name of “professionalism” and improving standards it engages in some of the most unprofessional and unethical conduct ever witnessed in the field of work with the blind.

In this context and against this background perhaps there is no use in trying to deal with NAC at all. However, we of the organized blind still persist. I officially and formally request that you

permit the National Federation of the Blind to have observers at future meetings of your executive committee and your board. I ask you to tell me in writing when the next meeting of the executive committee and the next meeting of the board will occur. I also tell you that the leaders of the National Federation of the Blind request the leaders of NAC to meet with us to discuss common problems. Further, we ask once again that NAC consider reforming itself. Otherwise, the blind and their friends will necessarily continue to do the job for you. All we ask of NAC is that it operate openly and democratically and in the best interest of the blind, and that it permit consumer representation on its board. We are, of course, aware that NAC has individual blind board members, but we are also aware (as are you) that these blind people are not consumer representatives.

Mr. Robinson, surely no good purpose is served by a continuation of the tantrum behavior which NAC has recently exhibited. Whether you like us or not, we are human beings, and we are blind human beings. We are also numbered in the tens of thousands. Therefore, we have a legitimate right to be concerned with what you are doing since it affects our lives, and to have what we say listened to seriously. I urge you to give careful consideration to what I have said and to make a positive response.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

□

NAC: STANDARDS

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, December 12, 1973.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
*President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: Your organization is invited to participate in the upcoming review of standards of the National Accreditation Council in order to insure that these standards continue to reflect developments in the field and the interests of users of service.

The NAC Commission on Standards has prepared a plan for this review, which will begin with the standards for physical facilities and follow with reviews of remaining standards. We believe your organization can make a distinctive contribution to this review process.

To begin with, we hope the National Federation of the Blind will participate in the review of standards for physical facilities by (1) suggesting knowledgeable users of service for a roster of resource persons from which we may invite individuals to participate in the review of these standards, and (2) reviewing the present NAC standards in this area.

(1) In order to suggest knowledgeable users of service, we hope you will identify from three to five persons who are aware of standards and accreditation, and have an interest in reviewing standards which can result in improved physical facilities of agencies that serve blind persons. It would be helpful if persons you suggest have recently received agency services or have

general knowledge of the important issues involved in evaluating physical facilities. We hope you will furnish us with the names of the users you have identified by December 31, 1973.

(2) In order to review the present standards for physical facilities, we suggest that your organization set up a study group, which would prepare a draft of any suggested revisions. Guidelines for this review will be provided as well as a set of the NAC Standards for Physical Facilities. The latter will provide a convenient form upon which you may make suggestions for modifications, deletions, or additions. We hope you can let us have your recommendations by April 1, 1974. Please use the enclosed postcard to reply. As soon as we receive your acceptance we'll send the guidelines and standards to help you get started. We are particularly interested in having input from your organization regarding these standards in view of your public critique of them as reported in the February 1966 edition of *The Braille Monitor*.

If you have any questions, please contact us. We are counting on your organization's assistance in assuring that the national standards continue to reflect the needs of persons served. As other standards are revised, we shall be in touch with you. Meanwhile, we look forward to hearing from you regarding the revision of standards for physical facilities.

Cordially,

Dr. GERALDINE SCHOLL,
*Chairman,
Commission on Standards.*

National Federation of the Blind
 will be pleased to ☐
 will be unable to ☐
 assist in the review of the Standards for
 Physical Facilities.

(SIGNATURE)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
 OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 3, 1974.

Dr. GERALDINE SCHOLL,
*Chairman, Commission on Standards,
 National Accreditation Council for
 Agencies Serving the Blind
 and Visually Handicapped,
 New York, New York.*

DEAR DR. SCHOLL: I have your letter of December 12, 1973, in which you request the National Federation of the Blind to "participate in the upcoming review of standards of the National Accreditation Council." Along with your letter you sent me a postcard and asked that I reply by making a check mark in a blank. As you will observe, I am answering by letter and not by the check mark system.

The reason is simple. There are items in your letter which require comment, and we have learned from painful experience that NAC sometimes interprets actions in unique ways.

In the first place the beginning sentence of your letter requires comment. It reads:

Your organization is invited to participate in the upcoming review of standards of the

National Accreditation Council in order to insure that these standards continue to reflect developments in the field and the interests of users of service.

You say in your final paragraph:

We are counting on your organization's assistance in assuring that the national standards continue to reflect the needs of persons served.

Of course, a thing cannot "continue" to do what it does not now do and what it has never done. As you well know, it is our considered opinion that the NAC standards do not reflect "developments in the field and the interests of users of service," nor do we think they "reflect the needs of persons served." Further, we believe that the place to begin to reform NAC is not at the level of considering this or that particular standard. The problem is more basic and far-reaching than that.

Accordingly, we have repeatedly asked NAC Board members to meet with us. They have refused to do it, usually responding with name-calling and character attacks. I take this occasion to tell you again that the National Federation of the Blind (the largest organization of blind people in this country) would like to meet with leaders of NAC to discuss NAC's undemocratic structure and behavior. Regardless of all of this, we are willing to participate in your present effort. We make this offer even though we know that your proposed "review of standards" may simply be an attempt at delay or diversion or obfuscation or some other maneuver for position.

Rather than "identify from three to five persons who are aware of standards and accreditation" and then have you select

one or more of them as participants, we would prefer to select our own representatives. We will be happy to have them present at any reasonable time and place you designate to meet with you. We shall also be happy to review your proposed guidelines for updating standards. We cannot, of course, guarantee in advance that we will agree with either your contentions or your methods. This comment seems appropriate in view of NAC's past behavior.

I thank you for writing to me, and I shall wait to hear from you further.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, January 1974.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: I refer to our letter of December 12, 1973. In closing that letter, I mentioned that we would be in touch with you as other standards are being revised.

Based on our plan for reviewing NAC standards, the Commission on Standards is beginning a review of a second set of NAC standards, those for vocational services (Section S-7 of the COMSTAC Report). As we have indicated, we feel that your organization can make a distinctive

contribution to the review process. Therefore, we are asking for your participation in the following ways:

(1) In order to suggest knowledgeable users of service, we hope you will identify from three to five persons who are aware of standards and accreditation, and have an interest in reviewing standards which can result in improved vocational services for blind persons. It would be helpful if persons you suggest have recently received agency services or have general knowledge of the important issues involved in evaluating vocational services. We hope you will furnish us with the names of the users you have identified by January 31, 1974.

(2) In order to review the present standards for vocational services, we suggest that your organization set up a study group, which would prepare a draft of any suggested revisions. Guidelines for this review will be provided as well as a set of the NAC Standards for Vocational Services. The latter will provide a convenient form upon which to make suggestions for modifications, deletions or additions. We hope you can let us have your recommendations by May 1, 1974. Please use the enclosed postcard to reply. As soon as we receive your acceptance we'll send the guidelines and standards to help you get started. We have your critique of these standards as reported in the March, 1966 edition of *The Braille Monitor*. However, we are interested in your current evaluation of these standards, since they have been used in accreditation in the past seven years.

We have not received your reply regarding our letter of December 12, 1973. However, we are hopeful that you will be interested in assisting us with these reviews

of the standards for physical facilities and vocational services.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Cordially yours,

Dr. GERALDINE SCHOLL,
Chairman,
Commission on Standards.

National Federation of the Blind

will be pleased to ☐

will be unable to ☐

assist in the review of the Standards for Physical Facilities.

(SIGNATURE)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 9, 1974.

Dr. GERALDINE SCHOLL,
Chairman, Commission on Standards,
National Accreditation Council for
Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.

DEAR DR. SCHOLL: I have your letter concerning vocational services, and I presume that you have received my letter answering yours of December 12. Since your letter is (with a few exceptions) almost word for word what you said in your earlier letter concerning the standards for physical facilities, I believe that my answer to that letter will suffice in the present instance. As in the earlier case, I do

not believe that it is appropriate to reply by checking a postcard since this might be misinterpreted as agreement with some of the statements in your letter which I regard as erroneous.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, December 14, 1973.

Mr. PERRY SUNDQUIST
Editor, The Braille Monitor,
Sacramento, California.

DEAR MR. SUNDQUIST: May we request reprints of articles which appeared in *The Braille Monitor*, January through June 1966, which discussed the standards of the National Accreditation Council.

We are undertaking a systematic review of NAC Standards for Administration and Services. For this reason it would be most helpful for us to refer again to earlier critiques of NAC standards.

If there is a charge for these reprints, kindly advise us of the amount, so that we may authorize payment before shipment.

Your anticipated assistance is appreciated.

Sincerely,

GERALD F. TOPITZER,
Research Associate,
ACSW.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 7, 1974.

Mr. GERALD F. TOPITZER,
Research Associate,
ACSW,
National Accreditation Council
for Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.

DEAR MR. TOPITZER: Your letter of December 14, 1973, to Mr. Sundquist has been referred to me for answer. Reprints of the 1966 *Monitor* articles concerning NAC are not readily available. In any case NAC or its parent organization (the American Foundation for the Blind) must surely have these articles on file. I say this because of Mr. Brandon's public statement at our 1971 national Convention that NAC had made extensive use of our critiques in finalizing its standards.

Further, NAC has repeatedly proclaimed with strident vigor that it is thoroughly familiar with our analysis of its standards. If you now tell me that you do not even possess copies of what we have said, I find the admission nothing short of astonishing. It is one more evidence of the lack of professional conduct and ethical behavior which NAC has so uniformly exhibited.

Regardless of all this, we could probably undertake to photograph copies of our NAC articles if you wish us to do so. We would charge you fifteen cents a page. In the circumstances, and in view of the questions of credibility, you may wish to reconsider your request. I shall wait to hear from you as to whether you wish us to

determine the number of pages and proceed with the work.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

P.S.—To emphasize the credibility gap posed by your letter, I herewith send you a communication I have just received from Dr. Geraldine Scholl—who is, as I believe you know, a member of the NAC Board. You will observe that she states with respect to our comments on the NAC standards for vocational services: "We have your critique of these standards as reported in the March, 1966 edition of *The Braille Monitor*." In an earlier letter Dr. Scholl indicated familiarity with the articles appearing on NAC in the February, 1966, *Monitor*.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, January 18, 1974.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: It is helpful to know that we can request photographic copies of *Braille Monitor* articles, but this will not be necessary at this time. My request to Mr. Sundquist was for reprints if they were readily available.

Cordially,

GERALD F. TOPITZER,
Research Associate,
ACSW.

□

BELIEF

[Editor's Note.—The State of Iowa has published the report to the Governor of the activities of the Iowa Commission for the Blind for the past fiscal year. The title of the report, **BELIEF**, is best explained in the letter of transmission to the Governor from the Director of the Commission. Following is the splendid record of progress made during the year.]

November 26, 1973.

Hon. ROBERT D. RAY,
*Governor of the State of Iowa,
State House,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

they have ever had in the history of our State.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
Director.

DEAR GOVERNOR RAY: It has been wisely observed that philosophy bakes no bread. It has been observed with equal wisdom that without a philosophy no bread is baked. This notion is, and always has been, a key factor in the programs of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. First: faith and confidence—or, in a word, **BELIEF**. The rest follows.

We have just finished the best year in our history, setting all-time records for helping blind persons find jobs. It has also been our best year in the total range of activity—library services for the blind, assistance to the elderly, orientation and training, work with blind college students, increased public understanding, and development of new skills and techniques.

Complying with Chapter 601B, Code of Iowa, the Commission for the Blind submits its annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1973. We are grateful to you for helping us make our **BELIEF** become reality. Blind persons now have more hope and greater opportunity than

New perspectives: Continuing **BELIEF**

The Commission for the Blind is constantly alert to learn of the latest techniques and devices to assist the blind. Sometimes these come from distant parts of the world; sometimes from close at hand. Sometimes the Commission for the Blind invents a device or discovers a new method; sometimes it uses the discoveries of others. Occasionally these new devices and techniques constitute major breakthroughs; more often they are added boosts or assists. They are never the key factor. They cannot replace training or determination or skill. They are never a substitute for **BELIEF**. Success for the blind person (as for the sighted) is a balance of personality, training, intelligence, aptitudes, skills, mechanical devices, financial means, good health, proper perspectives, and inner fortitude.

BELIEF translated into jobs

Success in rehabilitation means jobs and self-support. The Commission for the Blind provides the training needed for blind Iowans to enter employment, and the job placement contacts for newly acquired skills to be put to use.

Blind persons, like sighted persons, have varying abilities, capacities, and interests. Some achieve full self-support or support of a family. Others become competent housewives. Still others are capable of only partial self-support—each finding his own measure of success.

It is the function of the Commission to find the blind person and to provide encouragement, stimulation, training in the skills of blindness, vocational training, job counseling, contact with well-adjusted blind people, and job placement assistance. It is the responsibility of the blind person to work toward his own rehabilitation, utilize every physical and spiritual resource available to him, and strive to achieve his own success. This is being done ever more vigorously. It is the new pattern and the new philosophy—of the Commission for the Blind, and the blind themselves. It is the symbol and the substance of self-confidence and **BELIEF**.

*Blind Persons Rehabilitated:
Sixteen Consecutive Record Years*

1957	12
1958	24
1959	26
1960	40
1961	44
1962	50
1963	54
1964	59
1965	61
1966	68
1967	83
1968	90
1969	96
1970	102
1971	108
1972	116
1973	128

During fiscal 1973, 128 blind Iowans were rehabilitated. They were a cross section of the State's population. They were employed in a wide range of occupations—beautician, nurses' aide, real estate rental agent, lathe operator, X-ray developer, dishwasher, mathematician, cafeteria manager, typist, et cetera. The Legislature and executive branch of government made possible the funds; the Commission for the Blind provided encouragement, stimulation, know-how, training, and assistance in finding employment; the general public offered opportunity and understanding; the blind did the rest. They worked hard, and they had **BELIEF**. Their story is one in which Iowans can take pride. To some extent, every citizen of the State has contributed to their success and shared in their **BELIEF**.

The Commission has home teachers who visit blind persons throughout the State in their homes to teach the skills and techniques of blindness, disseminate information regarding blindness, and prepare referrals to other divisions of the Commission for the Blind, or, in some cases, to other service agencies. Now that the Commission Orientation Center is in operation, much of the work of the home teachers is done with elderly blind persons, many of whom do not go to the Center to receive its intensive training. They are helped to acquire skills to make them independent in daily living activities—mobility, Braille, techniques of homemaking and daily living, and (most important) self-confidence, **BELIEF**, and a new way of looking at blindness.

Vending stand and food service operation

In 1969, the Legislature passed a law of great importance to the blind. It reads in part: "It is the policy of this State to provide maximum opportunities for training blind persons, helping them to become self-supporting and demonstrating their capabilities A governmental agency which proposes to operate or continue a food service in a public office building shall first attempt in good faith to make an agreement for the Commission for the Blind to operate the food service without payment of rent. The governmental agency shall not offer or grant to any other party a contract or concession to operate such food service unless the governmental agency determines in good faith that the Commission for the Blind is not willing to or cannot satisfactorily provide such food service."

In fiscal 1973, the **BELIEF**, expressed by the 1969 Legislature and by the blind who sought passage of the law, truly began to be realized. When the law was passed, it was hoped that it would provide not only immediate and direct employment for the blind but would also serve as a demonstration and a model for private industry. It was the **BELIEF** that the citizens of Iowa visiting public buildings would see the blind at work and form a new image—that not only food service but other jobs, too, would result. In fiscal 1973, that **BELIEF** was more than justified. Three new food service operations were opened—one of the biggest, a cafeteria in a meatpacking plant. This brought the number of Commission for the Blind vending stand and food service operations to twenty-nine. Earnings of blind operators were up more than forty percent over the previous year.

Average Yearly Earnings of Blind Operators

1960	\$2,496
1962	2,772
1964	2,493
1966	3,377
1968	4,645
1970	5,256
1972	5,412
1973	7,584

Training: The road to **BELIEF**

It is respectable to be blind. This statement cannot be emphasized too strongly or made too often. A great percentage of the population (blind as well as sighted) still do not believe it. The Commission's job? Make it a reality—otherwise, nothing else counts. Everything depends on it—self-confidence, **BELIEF**, skills, techniques, the courage and the will to venture.

The orientation staff at the Iowa Commission for the Blind not only develop new techniques and improve old ones; they also teach the hundreds of proved ones to new students. It would be impossible for a single individual to devise or think of all these on his own. By attending the Center, the student can quickly learn long cane travel. Braille, typing, the use of the abacus, wood and metal work, personal grooming and hair styling, cooking and shopping techniques, and other skills.

More important, the student must learn new attitudes about blindness. It may be on a field trip around a campfire; it may be water-skiing, woodcutting, or attending meetings or visiting programs for the blind in another state; or it may be sitting in the recreation room at the Center, talking with a fellow student or staff member. The

where doesn't matter. The critical thing is for the blind person to come to have **BELIEF** in himself, to realize that he can be self-supporting, to learn that he can give as well as take, to be glad that he can have responsibilities, to know that life is good—to dream the impossible dream.

The mixture of skills and attitudes, of drudgery and dreams, of hard work and high hopes is the secret of the process. The rate of success is gratifyingly high, well over ninety percent. A few (a very few) go away defeated and bitter, blaming the world and the Commission for their blindness and failure; but the overwhelming majority leave happy and optimistic, prepared to fulfill their newly found **BELIEF**.

Blindfolds (called sleepshades) are used in class by those students with some remaining vision to overcome a false dependency on inadequate sight and to learn faster the alternative techniques of blindness. If the individual continues to try to use visual techniques (even though they are inadequate for him), he will probably not learn blind techniques at all. Also, if he has ten percent or less remaining vision (the generally accepted definition of blindness) and learns (without blindfold) to operate a power saw or some other tool, he will likely think the reason he can do it is because he still has some sight. He wonders what will happen if he loses any or all of the remainder.

If, on the other hand, he blindfolds himself and learns that he can function with safety and efficiency in the manner of a totally blind person, it tends to remove the fear. When the techniques have been learned to reflex perfection, he can remove the sleepshades and use that combination

of visual and blind techniques best suited to his own personal need. His willingness to undergo such training will depend almost entirely on whether he perceives it as “relevant” to his situation—which, in turn, will largely be determined by whether his instructors have the experience and maturity to see the “relevance.” If the atmosphere is such that the student must be “required” to wear the sleepshades, use a cane, or employ any other technique, the value is probably already lost. At the heart of the matter are the subtle and often unrecognized attitudes about what blindness really is and what it really means—whether the blind person can truly compete on terms of equality, whether he can actually perform as well as others, and whether he can really be a full-fledged, first-class citizen with all the rights and privileges and also with all of the responsibilities. Here, in this crucial area, many professionals in the field fall short (often without even knowing it) and do much damage. They lack understanding and skill. Even more, they lack **BELIEF**.

Library services:

Accomplishment and **BELIEF**

Through the Iowa Commission for the Blind Library great literature and popular magazines, professional books and textbooks, farm journals and light novels are available to the blind—in reading rooms at the Commission, or through the mail at home. Talking books (long play discs), open reel tapes, tape cassettes, large type, and Braille. A resource for Iowa's more than one hundred blind students in institutes of higher learning; for the hundreds of elderly blind; and for homemakers, elementary and high school students, professionals, farmers, and factory workers.

Almost forty thousand books were processed by the Library each month during fiscal 1973—a constant stream of material going to the borrowers and returning from them. It requires an active staff actively working. To the blind person it means the book he wants at the time he wants it.

Helping the blind achieve vocational sufficiency and social equality, the Commission Library is a key factor and a prime resource in the hope, accomplishment, and **BELIEF** being built by the blind of the State.

*Circulation of books and magazines
to blind readers*

Fiscal 1959	No Library for Blind
Fiscal 1960	0
Fiscal 1961	43,221
Fiscal 1962	57,797
Fiscal 1963	77,147
Fiscal 1964	89,301
Fiscal 1965	101,484
Fiscal 1966	120,563
Fiscal 1967	128,242
Fiscal 1968	153,404
Fiscal 1969	172,818
Fiscal 1970	190,236
Fiscal 1971	213,715
Fiscal 1972	222,490
Fiscal 1973	231,802

In 1959 Iowa had no library for the blind. Today, unexcelled—modern reading rooms, varied collections. Each year circulation has increased. In fiscal 1973 more than 230,000 books sent to blind people throughout the State. Total circulation since beginning of Library went over the one and three-quarter million mark during the year.

Chapter 601B, section five, Code of Iowa, 1973: "Bureau of information and library services. The Commission for the Blind may provide library services to blind and physically handicapped persons and shall act as a bureau of information and industrial aid for the blind. . . ."

The Commission for the Blind provides library services to those who, because of visual impairment or some other physical condition, cannot read regular print. Sometimes a borrower will use more than one means of reading—Braille as well as talking book; talking book as well as tape; et cetera. In the following chart the same Library user is often represented in more than one category. Some, of course, use only one kind of reading matter. Each employs the pattern best calculated to achieve his own desire, accomplishment, need, and **BELIEF**.

*Commission Library Borrowers,
June 30, 1973*

BLIND BORROWERS

Talking book	4,997
Braille	583
Open reel tape	294
Cassette tape	985
Large print	513
Total	7,372

NON-BLIND BORROWERS

Recorded media	1,146
Total, all categories	8,518

BELIEF accomplished through aids and appliances

The Commission for the Blind provides a variety of devices to the blind for use in their daily living. White canes, Braille watches and clocks, specially marked games, cooking utensils and timers with Braille dials, and adapted needle threaders are examples of what is available. All of these special aids are provided to the blind person either at the Commission's cost or, in cases of vocational or other established need, at less than cost or no charge, within the limits of the Commission's resources.

Volunteers: BELIEF in action

Iowa Lions—whose motto is "We Serve"—carry on numerous projects for the blind at the local club level and collectively through the Iowa Lions Sight Conservation Foundation. They finance Braille and tape projects such as that of the inmates at the State penitentiary, distribute and purchase special aids for the blind, give information about service available to persons in their community who have lost their sight, and have many club programs for self-education regarding blindness. Their unwavering support of Iowa's program for the blind for so many years is testimony to a deep interest and a real understanding of the problems of the blind.

So that the Commission's Library can have the books to send, hundreds of volunteers give their time and resources to produce Braille, tapes, and large type when specific materials are needed. In fiscal 1973 volunteer tapists read over 63,000 printed pages; over 102,000 printed pages were brailled; and more than 3,400 print pages were put into large type—in all, over 168,000 print pages were made available in

a readable form to the blind in only one year by volunteers alone. This labor of love by members of temple sisterhoods, church groups, service sororities, individuals, inmates at Fort Madison State Penitentiary, and similar institutions outside of Iowa is most gratefully acknowledged by the Commission for the Blind.

The Hawkeye Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers of America, the Thomas Griffith Chapter of the Independent Telephone Pioneers, and the other telephone workers throughout Iowa distribute and repair the thousands of talking book machines (record players for the blind), teach new Library borrowers their use, assist blind persons in book selection, and have seminars for their own training in their technical assistance to the blind. Without this volunteer service, the Commission for the Blind would be less able to provide proper library service to the blind of the State.

The home industries program of the Iowa Commission for the Blind enables blind persons who, because of age or some additional handicap, are not able to work competitively outside their own homes, to engage in productive activity. The hemming of towels and tablecloths, the making of dishcloths, apron sets, and cloth dolls are but some of these activities.

The items manufactured in the home industry program are distributed through the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs. Each club in the State has a "towel chairman" who coordinates local sales. In addition to this long-standing service project, the clubwomen of Iowa are increasingly active in public education about the capacities of the blind, in community development of opportunity

for the blind, in taping books for the Library, and in overall assistance to the Commission for the Blind at the community level.

The program of the Iowa Commission for the Blind would not be complete without many other individuals and organizations. Especially the blind themselves, organized to form the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa, work and consult with the Commission continuously to aid its staff in setting proper goals, teaching effective techniques, and opening economic and vocational opportunities.

The forward movement of Iowa's blind citizens is truly a joint effort of the

Legislature, the executive branch of government, service clubs, volunteer groups, and the public to cement into the traditions of our State the capacity of the blind to translate into accomplishment and reality their **BELIEF** in a full life.

During fiscal 1973 the Commission for the Blind will have available \$481,900 in State-appropriated funds for its regular operating budget. In addition approximately \$1,389,000 of Federal funds should be available to total \$1,870,900 to provide training and services of the type listed in this report.

The funds available should be enough to maintain and advance the program now developed for the blind of Iowa. □

MORE THAN LIP SERVICE

BY

CASPAR W. WEINBERGER

[Editor's Note.—The following editorial is reprinted from *Performance*, the publication of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Mr. Weinberger is Secretary of the Federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.]

One of the most gratifying and potentially rewarding programs I have encountered since becoming HEW Secretary is a pilot project which we hope may open new opportunities for employing the handicapped within the Department, and perhaps throughout the Government.

Created in December of 1972, the pilot study operates out of the personnel department of HEW's Social and Rehabilitation Service (SRS). Appropriately, the effort is directed by Patricia J. Thoben, who—although born without use of her legs and working from a wheelchair—has won promotions from GS-3 to GS-12 since entering Federal service.

Now in its initial phase, the project is surveying the approximately two thousand positions in SRS to determine which can be filled by qualified persons with physical or mental impairments. This follows through on the Department's stated policy of supporting equal opportunity for employing the handicapped, especially that part of the policy which stipulated that handicapped persons should be employed in positions consistent with their skills, knowledge, and abilities.

The second stage of the pilot project will involve implementation of the Department

policy supporting recruitment of qualified handicapped persons. Pilot project personnel will visit educational institutions, and private and public organizations which work with handicapped persons, to interview prospective job applicants and to acquaint them with the selection and placement procedures they will encounter.

The third and final stage of the pilot project will be to report its accomplishments, and specifically to recommend means by which its activities can be expanded on a Department-wide—and hopefully government-wide—basis.

I have pointedly noted Department policies in describing the pilot project. This is because it seems to me that large organizations all too often pay lip service to policies which are technically in effect, but which are neglected in day-to-day operations. Such lack of commitment robs the handicapped of real opportunity. Moreover, it denies such organizations the

services of a rich source of talented workers.

One vital aspect of the pilot project will be the systematic survey of SRS supervisors to determine their attitudes toward the handicapped, and the techniques they have for matching the tasks to be done with the abilities the handicapped employees bring to them. Obviously, ignorance and misconceptions about the true abilities of the handicapped often are major barriers.

It may well demonstrate, as a result of this pilot project's investigations, that the truly handicapped are the people who cannot envision and utilize the talents and capabilities of those who are physically or mentally impaired. I myself believe that the handicapped represent an invaluable resource whose abilities can and should be put to work on a far greater scale. I fully anticipate that the findings of this pilot project will bear me out. □

BUTTE MUSIC TEACHER IS "DYNAMITE!"

[Editor's Note.—The following is reprinted from the Helena, Montana, *SRS News*. Dorothy Dunn is a blind music teacher in the Butte Public School System. She is completing her third year in that position. Dorothy is a member of the Montana Association for the Blind and secretary of its Butte Silver Bow Chapter.]

There is a remarkable music teacher in Butte, Montana, who has designed such an interesting program that 100 out of 150 sixth graders at Emerson Grade School have voluntarily joined her chorus. And the chorus meets one-half hour before regular school hours!

Nearly as remarkable perhaps, the teacher, Miss Dorothy "Dede" Dunn, has been totally blind since birth. She is one of the true success stories of the Visual

Services Bureau of the Department of SRS, according to Emil Honka, bureau chief.

Dede received from the Department of SRS Braille training, mobility, and typing at a special school in Minneapolis. During her time at the College of Great Falls and later at Montana State University, she received tuition assistance and singing lessons. Upon completion of her music degree from MSU, Dede was given a Braille typewriter from SRS and assistance

locating a job. She was hired by Butte School District No. 1, and Bill Gannon, visual services mobility specialist, spent time orientating her to the city.

Dede was hired as a music instructor at both the Emerson Grade School and the Emerson Annex Grade School. There she teaches twelve frantic 25-minute classes a day to third, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders.

Dede is very frank with her pupils and each fall takes time to orient them to her blindness.

"I let them use my cane, close their eyes, and bump into things," she said. "Also they use my Braille writer. I tell them the only thing different about me is that I'm blind. I can still hear them, feel them, and talk to them."

The students respond with kindness and understanding. They move chairs before she can trip, write on the blackboard for her, and obey her as they would a sighted teacher.

"One time," Dede said, "I was talking very frankly with the children and asked them if they felt sorry for me at all. One said yes and I asked if it was because I was blind. The student said 'No, because you work so hard!' "

And she certainly does. Besides her music classes and chorus she is active in church and social groups, is composing her own musical works, and is a member of the Montana Association for the Blind. Also she arranges many numbers for various groups.

Arranging musical numbers for a blind person is most difficult. Dede must first decide on the arrangement, change the notes into Braille words, and later, after all alterations have been made, work with a friend to translate the Braille into a musical score. Of course, in order to play the piece she must memorize the entire work, but to practice, or learn the number, she uses her specially prepared Braille songbooks.

Dede lives in an apartment by herself and commutes to work daily with a friend. She alternates teaching at the schools so occasionally must walk the four blocks between them. For this she has prepared a Braille "map" which tells her exactly what turns to make, which steps are up and which down, and other specific information immediately apparent to a sighted person.

The principals at both schools are very fond of Dede and her work and she is equally fond of them. The word handicap never was mentioned and probably because with Dede Dunn, there is no handicap apparent. □

DISC JOCKEY'S JOB POSSIBLE WITH BRAILLE-MARKED CONSOLE

BY

MABLE ACKERSON

[Reprinted, with permission, from the *Bakersfield* (Calif.) *Californian*, August 17, 1973.]

Pete Kelley, 21-year-old native of Bakersfield and a 1970 graduate of West High School, is a disc jockey at KAFY radio. While a student at Bakersfield College, where he was program director of the campus radio station KBCC, he was interviewed for his present position.

What's unusual about that? Well, Kelley has been blind since birth. But he does not feel being blind is a handicap. In fact, he needs no outside assistance to fulfill his job requirements. He is able to work all controls and handle the complicated console as everything is marked in Braille.

Kelley took a Federal Communications

Commission control examination and he received broadcast endorsement before being hired for his present position. After more involvement with various aspects of radio, his plans center around working in programming.

Asked what particular kind of music he is most fond of he replied, "I'm interested in all music, but right now I'm involved with rock and contemporary and I know those styles best. But my mind is relatively open on the subject of music. Current hits are at the top of my list; however, what is played over the air is mostly dictated by station format and a certain time element involved in record releases," he explained. □

"BLIND" PREJUDICE AND ADOPTIONS: THE VIENI CASE

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN OF
VIET NAM ADOPTION AGENCY,
Boulder, Colorado.

To whom it may concern:

Our agency has received and examined the homestudy for Mr. and Mrs. Fred Vieni and guarantees that it meets the requirements and standards of the State of New York.

Friends of Children of Viet Nam Adoption Agency will gladly assist this

family in the adoption of a child from Viet Nam.

WENDE S. GRANT,
Executive Director.

cc: Rosemary Taylor
Fred Vieni

Saigon, June 24, 1973.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. VIENI: Thank you for your last letter and the enclosed cheque for five dollars. I am returning it to

you because I don't think I shall be able to help you at all with this adoption.

I know this will be a great pain to you but regulations here in Vietnam have changed in recent months and all our activities come under stricter control by the Ministry of Social Welfare. I feel that the Ministry would not approve of this placement. Placing a child with blind parents is to begin already with a handicap. I feel that with the super-abundance of adoptive homes available, it would not be fair to the child to deprive her of parents who could see, and all that means.

Please don't think I am criticising you in any way. I have the greatest admiration for you and what you have accomplished despite your handicap. I have thought very much about this adoption and I have finally reached the above conclusion. I thought it would be kinder to tell you simply rather than let you continue on with false hope.

You are at liberty to contact the other agencies here in Vietnam which are authorised to process adoptions. I enclose a copy of the appropriate addresses.

Believe me, I am very sorry indeed to have to deal you such a blow, but I do not feel confident enough to proceed with the adoption.

Sincerely,

ROSEMARY J. TAYLOR.

Between these two letters lay months of correspondence and decision with the orphanage, pictures of the daughter to come to them, news of her growth and

health, tedious arrangements with governments and lawyers, and waiting, and waiting, and waiting, but with the thought and plans for the joy to come. Then one person who holds the power smashes the whole plan—and another orphan is deprived of a loving family. But Miss Taylor did not stop with that awful missive. She was so horrified by the idea of placing a child with a blind couple that she persuaded her agency to adopt a sweeping resolution setting forth as agency policy that all blind persons were to be excluded from consideration as adoptive parents. The Vieni's were made subject to the policy—after the fact!

Word of Miss Taylor's decision in the Vieni case stirred quite a controversy among Miss Taylor's co-workers who were shocked at her obvious prejudice and her lack of understanding. They chided her about her attitudes in letters. She replied to them on July 11, 1973, with some asperity defending her stand, punctuating her feelings in capital letters:

“(2) The FCVN Colorado adoption group has been working flat out to try and regularise the situation with Danang adoptions in those cases where Sister Mary Angela [in charge of the Sacred Heart Nursery] has already sent a photo. [One cannot resist a comment on the reasoning employed by Miss Taylor. Adoptions are not begun or finalized on the basis of a photo sent to prospective adoptive parents. In fact, some parents reject children on the basis of photographs so received.] If the adoption group automatically approves all these placements already made by Danang, then they are not acting responsibly. It is to be supposed that there will be some adoptive placements which the adoption committee does not feel wise. This is the

whole point. If all the direct placements were to be automatically considered ideal, without any further judgment being brought to bear on the subject, the work of the committee, and the agency, is wasted."

"(3) In the VIENI case, FCVN committee for adoption did approve the homestudy. There is no blame or "prejudice" for which they are responsible. I myself brought up the matter while I was in Colorado because of my own misgivings. I had NO PREJUDICE against the family, and to accuse me of such is grossly unfair. I can see from their homestudy, and from letters, tapes, et cetera which have been flooding us here in Saigon, that they are extremely fine and capable people. However, I personally had many doubts of conscience in the matter . . ."

"(5) We all agreed that there is no question of PREJUDICE against the parents. We are considering only the BEST situation for a child. We will not knowingly prejudice the child's future in any way. With equal love and concern shown by two families, we shall naturally choose the family which can give the child the EXTRA gift of sighted parents. I stress again, our concern is not to fulfill the needs of certain parents, but to place a child in the best possible situation."

"(7) The decision in the VIENI case was mine AFTER consultation and a serious effort to understand the position. I know my limitations and I cannot in conscience handle this case. There are other agencies concerned with adoption here in Vietnam, and they could be approached. Because I refuse is no reason why they should refuse, if, as you say the case is so deserving."

"(9) I repeat again that I have absolutely no prejudice against the VIENI family, but

I simply find myself inadequate to handle their adoption. To speak of prejudice or lack of judgment is scarcely relevant. Speak if you wish of my own inadequacy. I, too, obviously have my limitations." [But it's safe to say she doesn't believe it.]

So, in "blind" prejudice, abysmal ignorance, insufferable arrogance, and unbelievable self-righteousness, Miss Taylor considers it in the "best interests" of this child not to give her to people who are blind, and insists that her unprejudiced concern is with the child and "is not to fulfill the needs of certain parents." And just what needs do these particular parents have? Does she know? Are they then so poor in personal qualities, ability to love and understand, and in such financial straights that a child placed with them would suffer?

Fred and Miriam are blind. He is a supervisor of teachers in the New York School System—no mean accomplishment for anyone, but given New York's attitudes about the blind one knows that Mr. Vieni is a special kind of person. Mrs. Vieni holds a degree in social work and is a professional in the full sense of the term. They have a normal, active, sighted, eight-year-old daughter. The Vienis are active in many community affairs as are their counterparts of similar educational, financial, and social standing. They have a large dose of social consciousness and they worry about the children who have no homes, and make an emotional and intellectual commitment. They have the means, they have the time, and they have the love to give to a child. They conclude that they also have the emotional stability to love as their own, a child of mixed racial heritage. This is not the decision of people who are in psychiatric or marital difficulties who feel

that they need a child to save their marriage or improve the state of their egos. This was a decision arrived at by emotionally secure and mature people.

One letter put the whole matter quite in focus on this score:

July 5, 1973.

DEAR MISS TAYLOR: I am writing to you in order to express my professional and personal concern for the Vieni family. I first met Miriam, Fred, and Debbie at the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island, where Fred served as a member of the board of trustees and Miriam worked with me in my capacity as chairman of the Sunday School Committee. I know Debbie as both a Sunday School student and a friend of my eight-year-old son. Since I am also a teacher and hold degrees in sociology and education, I feel I am competent to voice an opinion as to the nature, quality, and stability of the relationships within this family and between the Vieni and the community in which they live. And, since the point at issue is really their competence and ability as parents, I feel it particularly relevant to comment about their daughter's adjustment and development.

I do not believe that anyone meeting Debbie for the first time would have reason to think her parents were in any way handicapped. She is a self-sufficient, well-adjusted young lady who seems to have benefitted from her parents' insights, understanding, and attitude. I can think of no way in which their blindness has impeded her in her relationship with her parents or her peers; and, since she was raised from birth by Miriam and Fred, I can only conclude that lack of sight does not diminish the love, the concern, the care,

and the stimulation which every good parent provides for his or her child.

These observations of mine are merely a prelude to the point of this letter. There is a little girl in Viet Nam who desperately needs the affection and opportunities for normal growth and development which will be provided by the Vieni. I can think of no reason or justification for deciding that these prospective parents are not capable of filling this child's needs. To a normally sighted person blindness seems an insurmountable handicap. But it would be a mistake to make such a generalization. What valid standard can there be, other than that of judging each family, each set of prospective adoptive parents as individuals? And it is my opinion that the Vieni family can and does provide the kind of environment in which a child should be placed.

It is my hope that your procedures are flexible enough to allow decisions to be made on the basis of facts rather than stereotypes or preconceived generalizations. How tragic it would be if a child were prevented from joining this loving family because of bureaucratic rigidity functioning in place of humane intelligence.

Yours truly,

LAURA KIRK.

Arthur Dobrin, leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island, tried to educate Miss Taylor on the subject of handicaps when he wrote, in part, on July 7, 1973:

DEAR MISS TAYLOR:

Each of us is afflicted with a handicap. Most of ours are invisible—they are traumas of the soul or hidden hurts that prevent us from being the person we in our own mind think that we really are. For others, the handicap is obvious. You can't hide sightlessness. When our hurt is inward we are our own enemies. Unfortunately, when the hurt is external, others become enemies as well. And prejudice persists despite evidence to the contrary. There are people who believe that the Vienis cannot be good parents because they are blind. Debbie cannot be a normal child because her parents cannot see. But it is others who are blind to the facts. What makes us truly human is not the sights we see but the insights we have. There is no way to know who has and who doesn't have that facility by appearances.

Others offered their professional opinions, as in the letter which follows:

Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 17, 1973.

DEAR MISS TAYLOR: I am writing to encourage you to approve the adoption of My-Lan by Fred and Miriam Vieni.

I met Miriam while we both attended the University of Michigan School of Social Work in 1960. I am a resident of Michigan and am employed as Clinical Social Work Supervisor at the Huron Valley Child Guidance Clinic. Miriam and I have remained close friends and I visit with Miriam and Fred at least once a year. I last saw the Vienis in May of this year.

Their daughter, Debbie, is a delightful child—she is spontaneous, imaginative, and loving. Much credit for her excellent adjustment is due to the fact that she has warm and loving parents who know how to set limits appropriately. I am aware that there has been great concern about the Vienis' desire to adopt in view of the fact that Fred is blind and Miriam too has a visual handicap.

Good parenting is not necessarily affected adversely by physical handicaps. Both Miriam and Fred recognize their limitations, know when it is appropriate to seek help, and are consequently able to function with a maximum of independence.

Professionally I have seen many adopted children and their families whose problems often stem from the parents' unrealistic expectations of the child and their inability to help a child readjust to a different environment. I am convinced that Miriam and Fred possess more sensitivity and are more reality-oriented than most of the parents I see professionally. Also I feel their motivation in seeking to adopt is genuine. As a friend of the Vienis I have learned a great deal about what it means to be visually handicapped. As most people, I approached Miriam's visual difficulties with some misconceptions and anxiety on my part. Both Miriam and Fred feel comfortable in interpreting their situation to others. The fact that they have so many different kinds of friends certainly indicates that they are people who relate well to others.

I realize what a difficult decision you are faced with, and that is why I want to emphasize that in my opinion the Vienis assets far outweigh their handicaps, and I

do believe their desire to adopt and their confidence that they can help My-Lan to grow up to be a well adjusted individual is quite realistic.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) LORE JONAS,
ACSW.

Some weeks later, FCVN evidently had a few twinges of conscience and thought they also owed the Vienis some explanation of their outrageously discriminatory action. As you see, this letter did not do much to improve the relationship. But Mrs. Vieni proves to be a woman of some spirit and replied in kind.

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN OF
VIET NAM ADOPTION AGENCY,
Boulder, Colorado, July 19, 1973.

Mr. and Mrs. FRED VIENI,
Wantagh, New York.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. VIENI: We feel that we should clarify for you our reasons for not approving your home for placement of a Vietnamese child. We did send you a letter of approval and are aware that our final decision not to approve you must have been harder to bear because of that fact. I am very, very sorry that this circumstance occurred.

As I believe you are aware, we held a staff meeting with Rosemary Taylor which added some information that we had not known at the time of your approval. After painful and long deliberation, we decided that we had to make a policy not to accept blind couples as potential adoptive parents. This was a full staff decision, not a decision

of one member only. *The difficulty arose over your approval because we had considered your family as we consider all families, on an individual basis.* [Emphasis added] When we felt it necessary to make this general policy, you were affected by it.

If this leaves you with more questions, please feel free to telephone me . . . or to write me at the above address. We certainly regret having to withdraw our approval at this point.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) LAUREL UMILE, MSW,
Social Worker.

Wantagh, New York, July 21, 1973.

DEAR MRS. UMILE: Thank you for your very clever letter. I'm sure that the reasons given in it will convince anyone else who inquires about our case.

Very recently, Miss Taylor refused to do an adoption for the president of the Georgia chapter of FCVN because she was "too anxious to get her child's release papers." Are you now going to formulate a policy that FCVN will refuse any family which is too anxious to get their child's release papers?

Miss Taylor has arranged adoptions for single parents. Is one single sighted parent better than two blind ones?

Miss Taylor has also arranged an adoption for a couple in which the father is paralyzed from the waist down. Is blindness worse on your scale of values than paralysis?

I am an ACSW. I graduated from the University of Michigan School of Social Work. I become more and more disillusioned with my fellow professionals as time goes on.

Sincerely,

MIRIAM VIENI.

Now thoroughly angered, Mrs. Vieni began contacting her Congressmen and others for assistance and sent a sharp letter reviewing her situation to the agency which licensed FCVN to arrange adoptions. They sent her what Federationists have come to expect from governmental agencies—a reply that put the responsibility elsewhere. It became the standard reply sent to all Congressmen and other officials who made inquiries about the Vieni case. And, at the end of July, the Vienis appealed to the National Federation of the Blind. Perhaps the Vienis and the State of Colorado are about to discover that we have learned a lot from the black movement and are not without the wherewithal to be of considerable assistance.

Wantagh, New York, July 16, 1973.

STATE DEPT. OF SOCIAL WELFARE,
Denver, Colorado.

DEAR SIR: Enclosed you will find a letter describing our attempt to adopt a black-Vietnamese little girl through Friends of Children of Vietnam Adoption Agency, recently licensed in your State. You will find a copy of that agency's statement of approval of us as adoptive parents. You will also find a letter to us from Miss Rosemary Taylor, the agency's representative in Saigon.

I have written to you previously as a distraught potential adoptive parent and I received no response. Since I am also a qualified social worker with an ACSW and New York State certification and since it is apparent from the copy of a letter Miss Taylor sent to someone who had written to her on our behalf, that she will not change her mind, I am writing to you now just to make the following points.

I do not know much about the law but I assume that when an agency is licensed, it must conform to certain state regulations. It would seem to me that if the agency makes known to its clients the procedures they must follow in order to be considered for adoption, it is incumbent upon that agency to follow its own procedures. Friends of Children of Vietnam required a home study from a local licensed agency and this we provided for them. They made it very clear that it was their prerogative to accept or deny any case after reviewing the home study. They reviewed our case and I assume that the two MSW's who consult with them were involved in this review, and they found us acceptable. They forwarded notification of our acceptance to Miss Taylor.

Miss Taylor is not a qualified social worker nor is she employed by FCVN. It was never stated to us, or to any other family that we know about, that Miss Taylor was to review FCVN's decision and give her own approval on each case. Yet, if you read her last letter carefully, you will see that this is happening not only in our case, but in the case of another family (not yet informed that they are to be denied). Therefore, it seems that your licensing of this agency is but a farce. For in fact, FCVN has no power to approve or disapprove cases. That power rests solely with Miss Taylor.

It is, at the least, unethical for an agency to publicize itself as an agency with power to help people with Vietnamese adoptions and with regulations and procedures which must be followed if, in fact, only one person makes decisions based on her personal prejudices rather than on the information provided. If Miss Taylor is to be involved in this decision-making process, then this should be stated to potential adoptive parents at the onset.

It is apparent from what she writes that Miss Taylor has made in our case what she feels is an ethical decision. She makes it very clear that once she has made such a decision, there is no information, no facts, no professional opinion, which might cause her to change her mind. She indicates that she consulted with someone from your Department about our case. I submit that a professional social worker could not use the kind of reasoning which Miss Taylor uses: Parents with normal vision must be better parents than those with defective vision. Social workers are taught to individualize each case. Abstract generalizations characterizing groups of people as acceptable or not acceptable are not permissible, I hope, in your Department. Of course visual handicap is an important factor but its importance must be judged in the context of the total situation. Having "sighted parents" is not "a gift" as Miss Taylor seems to believe. But having capable, loving parents who can accept a "different" child and help that child learn to live in a very complicated world, is.

If FCVN is allowed to continue to function in this manner, then Miss Taylor can, at any time, refuse a family because of her own personal prejudice or lack of knowledge. You may shortly be hearing

about the other case which she is going to refuse to work with. No one knows who the family is or on what basis her judgment is made. We do know that it is a family which has been approved by FCVN. We also know that contrary to her allegation, FCVN did not approve all families who had been assigned children, automatically.

Colorado FCVN requested a license when Miss Taylor was feeling that her position in Vietnam was threatened by the Vietnamese Government. The agency, according to those who are close to its founders, was formed solely to keep Miss Taylor functioning in Vietnam. I wonder if the agency should not also be concerned about its responsibilities to the State of Colorado and to those people throughout the Nation whom it is supposed to be serving.

Sincerely,

MIRIAM VIENI.

STATE OF COLORADO,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES,
Denver, Colorado, July 19, 1973.

Mrs. MIRIAM VIENI, ACSW, CSW,
Wantagh, New York.

DEAR MRS. VIENI: This is in response to your letter of July 4, 1973, with which you enclosed a copy of your letter to Senator Javits.

The staff of the Friends of Children of Viet Nam has apprised us of all events in your situation. We need to tell you that we would in no way interfere with casework or policy decisions made by a child-placement agency licensed by this department so long as that agency followed acceptable adoptive practice.

We certainly recognize there has been a good deal of confusion surrounding your efforts to adopt a Vietnamese child. It would be our position always that the agency responsible for a child had the final decision about the choice of a home for that child.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. DOROTHY D. ANDERS,
*Director, Family and Children's Services,
Division of Public Welfare.*

Miss AVA SNOOK, ACSW,
Adoption Consultant.

Wantagh, New York, July 30, 1973.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES,
Denver, Colorado.

DEAR MISS SNOOK: Thank you for your letter of July 19. Since that time, you have probably received a second letter from me in which were enclosed correspondence to me from Miss Rosemary Taylor in Saigon and Mrs. Wendy Grant in Boulder. I realize that under normal conditions, you expect an agency which has been licensed by the state to function without interference. However, I think that you will agree that Colorado FCVN is rather unusual in that it has no paid staff and that its director and most of its staff (volunteer) are not professional. Therefore, I would hope that as adoptions consultant, you would be keeping a special watch on this agency. This is why I believed that you would welcome feedback from those the agency is supposed to be serving.

I am enclosing the latest communication which I have received from FCVN. I

consider this *new* policy, which has been formulated as a reaction to our objections to Miss Taylor's unilateral decision to refuse to do our adoption, as highly discriminatory and unprofessional. It is aimed at a class of people regardless of individual personal qualities and resources. There is no realistic justification for such a policy. It is based on ignorance about blindness and on prejudice.

Having a social worker write such a letter hardly makes it more respectable. Rather, it makes the professionalism of the social worker suspect.

Luckily for FCVN and the State of Colorado, blind people as a group do not have the money and power that, for example, black people have. So it is unlikely that FCVN can be brought to court for such a policy. We can only hope for the sake of the agency that Miss Taylor does not decide to refuse members of a more powerful minority in the future.

However, I will refer Miss Umile's letter to the National Federation of the Blind to see if this organization would be willing to take any action on behalf of legally blind people who wish to adopt.

Sincerely,

MIRIAM VIENI, CSW, ACSW.

Miriam Vieni has not given up hope of adoption, but she is worried. Her letter to the orphanage in Viet Nam expresses her anxiety and her hope. The National Federation of the Blind is not yet in court on this matter but the National Federation of the Blind is not about to let this blatant case of "blind" prejudice go unchallenged.

Wantagh, New York, August 4, 1973.

DEAR SISTER ANGELA: We were so happy to receive your letter and the pictures of My-Lan today. She is very pretty. It is such a relief to know that you are keeping her for us.

We have already written to Holt and ISS. But you know that they take a very long time. We want to have My-Lan as soon as possible. So we have also written to M. Jean Lambert, a very well known lawyer in Saigon. We think that he can help us. He wrote to us and said that he would try.

Our little girl Debbie was so happy to read your letter and see the pictures. Today my mother came to visit and she saw the pictures too. We were losing hope but now we all feel better. Perhaps everything will still be all right.

I am sending another five-dollar check for you. I wish we could do more to help. But here, everything is costing more and more so there is less and less money. But I know that the people in New York FCVN will be helping you more now than they did before.

I will tell the Lees that you received their letter. Their little girl is fine. She is getting used to being in America.

I will write again soon.

Sincerely,

MIRIAM VIENI.

We know that the relationship between parent and child is not dependent upon whether the parents are fully able-bodied or not. Does it really matter whether the parents are natural or adoptive? What is really involved in the business of being a parent? Here in a neat verbal nutshell is the kernel of what being a parent, especially an adoptive parent, is all about:

What is left of the parent-child status "created by nature" when the law can and does fix, declare, and create an adoptive parent-child relation, thereby at the same time extinguishing the relation of parent and child which existed before and was "created by nature?" Moreover, just what is the "natural relation" under discussion? It is scientifically clear that the "natural relation" is not what it is commonly said to be, namely, a "blood relation." If the genetic connection is what is meant, then it must be noted that the act of transmission is accomplished in a comparatively short time and does not necessarily involve any after-contact or relationship. Is this "natural relation" more natural or more important than the mutual, reciprocal, and continuous relation between parent and child, which may occur in adoptive or non-adoptive families, involved in the rearing of a child from infancy to maturity with all of the impact of day-to-day care and upbringing upon character, psychology, outlook, emotional makeup, and even biology which that entails? In this sense, does not nature "do the work of nature" and create one a child who by nature is a stranger? In fact, in this sense, does not nature do the work of nature and create one a child who by nature is not a stranger?" [tenBroek, "California's Adoption Law and Programs," 6 *Hastings Law Journal* 261, 276 (1955)]

Another passage from that work is particularly applicable to the Vieni case:

Most important of all is the need for flexibility and individualization. Generally, the weight to be attributed to any particular element should depend on what other

elements are present in the case and how it combines with them. These matters should not be determined by automatic formulas; and, while the elements that should be

considered may be listed, . . . they cannot be prescribed by mandatory rule. . . . Perhaps oftener it might be proper to ordain the irrelevancy of a factor. [Id at 318] □

THE BLIND TEACHER IN ACTION

BY

ROBERT ACOSTA

[Editor's Note.—Robert Acosta is the president of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind. The Teachers Division has organized itself for a threefold purpose. First, it meets annually to allow blind teachers to share those experiences which will help them to be stronger teachers both professionally and academically. Second, the members of the Teachers Division seek to prove to school administrators once and for all that blindness in a teacher need not be an insurmountable handicap. Third, working through the National Federation of the Blind, the Teachers Division sponsors needed state and national legislation on behalf of blind teachers.]

The question has often been asked by too many school administrators across this Nation: Can blind teachers teach? The fact is that blind teachers are teaching on every level of education from the elementary through the university curricula. The great majority of these teachers are instructing sighted students in a regular classroom situation.

It would be most difficult for me to list those methods which blind teachers have developed in order to help their students to learn. The true measure of a good teacher is this: has he helped children to learn? Experience indicates that blindness neither qualifies nor disqualifies a person for the teaching profession. Good teaching, whether an instructor is sighted or not, depends upon the mutual respect which both teacher and student develop for one another. If good teaching were to be equated with perfect vision, then a school administrator need only give teacher candidates an eye examination and hire only those with 20/20 vision. However, a

good teaching situation occurs when both the teacher and the student can reach out to one another and begin to explore new thoughts and concepts together.

In order to show the reader that blind teachers can indeed teach, let me review the success story of the blind teacher across this Nation. California now employs more than 110 blind teachers, who work on every level of education in the public and private schools. Of this number, over ninety percent enjoy tenure in their respective districts. In a Senate Fact-Finding Survey which was taken by the California State Senate in 1965, out of the 45 school principals interviewed, 42 of them stated that they would hire another blind teacher if given the opportunity. New York State public schools employ about 60 blind teachers, with approximately 15 working within the City of New York. There are approximately 35 blind teachers employed in Illinois, 25 in Minnesota, and a number in other states. In fact, it would be proper to assert that the blind teacher

can be found working successfully in every state of the Union.

And yet, in spite of the many achievements of blind teachers, there are still too many blind teacher candidates waiting to be hired: people with advanced teaching credentials and with outstanding cadet teaching recommendations. One reason for this unfortunate situation is the tremendous teacher surplus which currently exists throughout this country. Because of this situation, it seems that the blind teacher is the last to be hired and the first to be dismissed, allegedly due to budget cutbacks. However, in the opinion of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind, the most significant reason for the refusal of too many school administrators to even consider the employment of a well-qualified blind teacher can be found in the age-old myths and misconceptions which society holds towards the blind. For too long, society has believed that if a person is blind, he consequently must be both helpless and hopeless. To be told that some four hundred blind teachers are working in the public schools of this Nation would be beyond the imagination of the general public. It must be remembered that school administrators are a very important part of that public.

What are some of the major concerns of school personnel when considering the employment of a teacher who happens to be blind? Discipline and classroom control must stand at the top of the list. This is perfectly understandable from the viewpoint of an administrator. If his sighted teachers are having problems in this area, then surely the problems of the blind teacher in the classroom must be worse. A good teacher must first make the

assumption that his students are in the classroom to learn. Beginning with this viewpoint, a good teacher, whether he be blind or sighted, must earn the respect of his students. The blind teacher must be very certain to organize his lesson plan as well as his classroom technique. But this is true of any conscientious teacher. I wish to make it very clear that many of the methods which I will discuss should be used by any strong teacher whether he be sighted or blind.

To alleviate some disciplinary problems many teachers, especially in the lower grades, have found much success with the "buddy system." Most students relish the opportunity to be given responsibilities in the classroom. Under the "buddy system," each student is asked to know where his partner is. For example, if his "buddy" is absent, a student reports this fact to his blind teacher. Many blind teachers of my acquaintance have used this method with much success.

"If I employ a blind teacher, surely the parents will complain," say school administrators. This has proven to be an unfounded worry on their part. Parents have the right to feel concern if it appears to them that their children are not learning. If true education is going on, parents do not care whether the teacher possesses two heads and a tail. In my nine years of teaching, no child has ever requested a transfer from my class on account of the fact that I happen to be blind.

Another concern of the school administrator is the safety factor in the classroom. Again, I have found that the blind teacher has been more than equal to this challenging problem. The blind teacher has learned the worth of classroom

organization. One young teacher I know taught her first graders to come to her side immediately when she waved her white cane in the air. If students have confidence in their teachers, they will respond to their commands in any emergency situation.

Insurance rates will skyrocket upon the employment of a teacher who happens to be blind—this also has proven to be a myth. School districts in many states, as units of state government, are not subjects of liability suits under the doctrine of governmental immunity. This doctrine protects school districts against liability suits for all of their employees.

The point which I would like to emphasize is that each blind person must develop many alternatives to solve the various problems which come up in any given day's work. For example, to solve the transportation problem, some blind teachers will purposely live within walking distance of their schools. If they cannot walk to school because of distance, they either get a ride or take a bus. They will do whatever must be done in order to perform the duties of their assignment. The well-oriented blind person has developed those alternatives which enable him to cope with his environment.

Many states have passed laws which protect the blind teacher candidate from being discriminated against in the hiring halls. But it is not enough to have laws on the statute books. True equality can only be obtained when we have won the hearts of the American people. When blind people are no longer viewed as helpless, hopeless human beings needing assistance from the state; when we are seen as men and women with the same goals and aspirations as our

sighted brothers; then true equality and first-class citizenship will have been obtained. Every day, more and more blind persons are taking their places in the mainstream of American society thanks to the tireless efforts of the National Federation of the Blind, which attempts to educate the public regarding the abilities of the blind.

Due to the efforts of the Teachers Division, working within the framework of the National Federation of the Blind, many great strides have been made on behalf of the blind teacher. We are convincing school administrators that blindness in a teacher need not be an insurmountable handicap. With each passing year, more and more people, school administrators and the public alike, are coming to realize the many talents possessed by blind people.

It is my hope that the good people of this Nation will begin to encourage their respective school districts to consider the employment of well-qualified teachers who happen to be blind. We do not ask to be hired simply because we are blind, but because we bring many talents to the classroom. Each day, as we stand before our classes, we are convincing our students that blindness can be reduced to nothing but a minor inconvenience, provided that one receives the proper training and opportunity.

Should you wish any information regarding the subjects which blind teachers teach, or any other information concerning the purposes of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind, direct your comments to the National Federation of the Blind, 218 Randolph Hotel Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. □

HANDICAPS NO LONGER BARRIER TO TRAVELERS

BY

ROBERT LINDSEY

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When Ruth Williams, a retired social worker who lives in Albany, reads a travel brochure, it is in Braille.

Miss Williams has been blind since birth. But it hasn't deterred her from traveling to Paris, where she discovered the beauty of the Venus de Milo with her fingertips, or to London, where she glimpsed the city through the voices of its people and the sounds of its streets. This winter she will tour the Orient.

Carey Fudge of Denver is disabled by a stroke. Harriet Wheel of Evanston, Wyoming, cannot walk. James Whitey of Palo Alto, California, has cerebral palsy. All three are packing for a round-the-world trip this fall!

Handicapped Americans have begun to travel as never before. Although traveling for the physically handicapped can be a succession of painful obstacle courses, many of the obstacles are falling.

To a certain extent, the travel industry seems to have discovered the handicapped traveler recently.

At least five travel agencies around the country have developed special tours tailored for the blind and physically handicapped. They range from African safaris to round-the-world trips, to wheelchair visits to the restored colonial village at Williamsburg, Virginia.

After an experimental program last year, Pan American World Airways this year became the first airline to offer regular tours to Europe and the Orient for the handicapped. A Pan Am executive who is confined to a wheelchair because of childhood polio, directs the program.

Meanwhile, new guidebooks have been published that help the handicapped make camping trips to state and national parks.

And the Federal Aviation Administration recently initiated a special rule-making investigation aimed at eliminating airline discrimination in transportation of handicapped persons. Some airlines, notably small regional lines, have been accused of requiring nonambulatory passengers to be accompanied by an attendant.

"I think a lot of people in the travel industry have just come to realize the existence of the handicapped," Mrs. Betty Hoffman, who operates the Nation's first and largest travel agency dealing in tours for the handicapped, said in her office here.

"A lot has happened in the last two years," she continued. "Even in the last six months you could notice it. Some of the motels and airlines are asking me what they can do to help the handicapped."

Travel agents say airlines that once were reluctant to carry a large number of handicapped passengers for safety

reasons—Pan American was one of them—now have specialists that encourage this clientele.

They say motel chains, such as the Holiday Inn group, are increasingly building special rooms proportioned to handle guests in wheelchairs.

“Old taboos are falling by the wayside and the tourist industry is waiving restrictions for the handicapped,” said Murray Fein, a Hollandale, Florida, travel agent who also operates tours for the handicapped.

The travel industry’s dawning concern for these people seems to be accompanied by a growing determination by many handicapped persons to share in the travel experiences afforded others.

Pat Klinger, a foreign language translator who lives in Rossford, Ohio, is an example. She is thirty-four years old and paralyzed below the neck. She said that all her life she had longed to travel and, after going to Europe and Israel last year with a group of other handicapped people, “I realize I can do almost everything everybody else does. Traveling gives us a tremendous psychological uplift.”

Travel industry experts cite a number of reasons for the increasing mobility of the handicapped:

- Efforts by representatives of the handicapped to remove so-called “architectural barriers”—curbs, impassable stairways and other obstacles—from many hotels and resort areas, and the growing

number of cities and states that require removal of such barriers in new buildings.

- Increased mobility of Americans generally, which has made the handicapped more conscious of travel and what it offers.

- The increased number of people who are handicapped and can afford to travel—those with full-time jobs; the increasing population of older Americans, many of whom are partially disabled but want to travel; and the growing number of young Americans disabled as a result of injuries in Vietnam or in traffic accidents.

The number of persons who potentially could benefit from the opening of doors to handicapped travelers is large: about 250,000 Americans are confined to wheelchairs. Many thousands more have other serious disabilities.

The number is growing as more and more veterans who were crippled in Vietnam reenter the mainstream of civilian life. More than 2,100 military personnel are paraplegics—loss of the use of two limbs—or quadraplegics—loss of four limbs—because of war injuries.

Despite the recent gains, however, serious financial, physical, and psychological problems remain for many handicapped persons who want to travel.

“Many resort hotels in Rome, Paris, or Miami still refuse permission for the handicapped during the season,” Fein, the Florida travel agent, said. “They say their regular customers just don’t want to see the handicapped and check out.” □

NEW HAMPSHIRE CONVENTION

BY

AL BECKWITH

The 1973 convention of the NFB of New Hampshire was held in Nashua on September 29 and 30. President William Higgins called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., before a very good turnout. After an invocation by Captain Burkhart of the Salvation Army, the convention officially began.

Mr. Dikorsky of the Manchester office of Social Security was the first speaker, and he covered a wide range of programs pertaining to the blind which are administered by the Social Security Administration. He covered such items as quarters of coverage needed, disability benefits, and gave a very good explanation of the new Supplemental Security Income.

John Taylor, Assistant Director in Charge of Field Operations, Iowa Commission for the Blind, and representative of the National Federation of the Blind, was the next speaker. He expounded further on some of the issues raised by the previous speaker, and with illustrations, clarified these points. Mr. Taylor opened a lively discussion session that really drove every point home, and was really understood by all.

The afternoon session opened with probably one of the best panels our conventions have ever had. Panel members were: John Mungovan, Director, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind; Bruce Archambault, Chief, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Education, State of New Hampshire; Jules Cote, special consultant, Visually Handicapped,

Department of Education, and Mr. John Taylor.

Mr. Mungovan was the first speaker, and gave a brief outline of the work done by his office. He then spoke of proposed regulations by HEW and why they would work a hardship on many of the blind. Mr. Mungovan presented the objections to the proposed regulations, and he urged as many as possible to write in protest.

John Taylor spoke of the gains made in the last fifty years. He talked about the future—some of the aims, goals, and aspirations of the blind. He urged that the blind stand up as one, go to the legislators, and attend hearings in numbers, because, as he said, if you need more appropriations, that is where the money comes from.

Bruce Archambault was quite direct and said he believed that the agencies should be concerned with accountability. He said that of course without proper funding, services cannot go ahead. He also stressed that more voices should be heard, and that those in charge should be responsive to those voices. He assured the people that he was a strong advocate of consumerism, and that he would like to see a consumer council established. Mr. Archambault emphasized that he was with the blind, and that he did not want to see our identity lost in the shuffle of departmentalism.

Jules Cote spoke about his work in educating blind children. When he joined the staff in 1971, he had a staff of two teachers, and a budget of \$15,000, and by

1973 it had grown to a staff of eleven, and a budget of over \$90,000. This money was not all State appropriations; by delving into every available place, Mr. Cote was able to get more funds, and even more Federal funds, than were expected. Mr. Cote said that while there has been a gradual increase of services to blind children in the area of education, there is not anywhere near enough being done. He also said he was able to employ a visually impaired girl as an aide, and he honestly thinks that she is doing a better job than most sighted persons.

A good discussion followed, with the panel members questioning each other and the audience really joining in, bringing up points for clarification, and adding to the edification of all.

The banquet was attended by about 150 people. Members of the State Legislature were at the head table, one of whom brought greetings from Governor Thomson. The banquet speaker was John Taylor, who gave an excellent address.

The business session was convened on Sunday, and several reports were heard, among them one on the national Convention, and another on the proposed regulations changes by the FAA. Legislative actions on both the State and Federal level were reported.

Motions were passed: to strongly endorse the stand of the NFB on the two-for-one air fare; to oppose the proposed FAA regulations concerning limited or restrictive plane travel for the blind; and to endorse the reorganization of the New England Conference of State Affiliates of the NFB.

Helen Hutchins was approved as delegate to the Reorganization Committee for the New England Conference. Frank VanVliet is to go to the hearings of the proposed FAA regulations changes, and was urged to carry our voice of disapproval.

It was voted to cancel the plan to hold the convention in Berlin, New Hampshire, next year, and move it to the seacoast region, where it is hoped a new chapter will be formed. Ed Vachon was reelected to the executive board. David Brownell was appointed by the president to investigate the possibility of a student division in the seacoast area and to report back to the committee.

The secretary was delegated by the president to send a letter of thanks to Chris Spirou for his help in getting legislation for the blind passed.

It was one of our better conventions, in that there was much audience participation and discussion. It seems that if you don't get lively discussion, you don't have a really good convention. □

RECIPIES OF THE MONTH

SUBMITTED BY
FLORENCE GRANNIS

[Editor's Note.—Mrs. Grannis is Assistant Director in charge of Library and Social Services, Iowa Commission for the Blind.]

SCOTCH SHORTBREAD

Ingredients

1 cup butter
½ cup sugar
2½ cups sifted all-purpose flour

Method

Cream the butter. Gradually add the sugar, beat until light and fluffy. Gradually add the flour and blend well. Roll dough into a rectangle one-quarter inch thick. Cut into squares or diamonds and prick with a fork. Bake 25-30 minutes in a 300° oven until lightly browned.

LIZZIES

Ingredients

½ cup brown sugar	¼ teaspoon cloves
¼ cup butter	1½ tablespoons milk
2 eggs	⅓ cup bourbon or orange juice
1½ cups sifted flour	1 pound seeded raisins, washed and dried
1½ teaspoons baking soda	1 pound pecan halves
1 teaspoon cinnamon	½ pound citron, chopped
¼ teaspoon nutmeg	1 pound candied cherries

Method

Cream sugar and butter thoroughly. Add eggs and beat until light and fluffy. Sift together one-half cup flour, soda, and spices. Add to egg mixture. Coat raisins thoroughly with remaining flour. Add milk and bourbon, mixing well. Add raisins, nuts, citron, and candied cherries. Drop onto greased cookie sheet and bake at 325° for 25 minutes. Makes about 6 dozen. □

MONITOR MINIATURES

BLIND PEOPLE IN THE NEWS . . . Active Federationist **Lorraine Arvidson**, who, among her other activities, is a Braille proofreader.—Latest to join the growing list of blind people entering the real estate field is **Clem Sins** who lives in Sacramento, California.—**Carla Pingley**, a blind coed who plays the clarinet in West Virginia University's Marching Band. It was noted that she leaves the stadium as do the other students after band practice—crawling under the fence—and manages marching formations by counting steps.—The Medical Records Department of Binghamton General Hospital in New York has a happy, efficient part-time worker in clerk-typist **Patricia Jamba**.—Also in the news from New York is piano tuner **John Justice** of Dumont who doubles at night—not in brass—but as a pop pianist-organist, and patrons at the tavern where he works like his “cocktail jazz.”—Manchester, New Hampshire, boasts a blind grid analyst who does radio work. He is **Jack Thornton** who is a senior in sociology at St. Anselm's College.—**William Carey Baker**, known to his friends as “Carey,” has been part of the scene at the Danville, Kentucky, Post Office, doing business at his vending stand, since 1936.—Last year **Donald Freeman** entered the competition in the AAU-sanctioned Open Masters swim meet in Colorado. His biggest problem—figuring out where the end of the pool is in the 100-yard back stroke.—Former police chief **Harry “Butch” Meyer** became a police dispatcher when he recuperated from his blinding eye disease. He thinks he is the only blind police dispatcher in South Jersey.—**Lygia Diaz**, **Susan Gnat**, **Michael Bohan**, and **Harriet Levy**, are part of an art class at C. W. Post College in Greenvale,

New York, which does life-size sculpting in a variety of media.—**Herb Venook** of Metuchen, New Jersey, is chief trouble-shooter for people in trouble at the Rutgers Center for Computer and Information Services.—Blind golf champion from Waltham, Massachusetts, **Joe Lazaro**, who works for Raytheon Company there.—**Christine Bungert** of New Jersey who hopes to be a physical therapist after graduating from college.—**Richie Kurlander** and **Pat Mitchell**, students at Long Island University who are disc jockies on WLIU, the student radio station.—The blind can lead the blind asserts **James A. Kutsch, Jr.**, of Wheeling (West Virginia) College where he is an instructor and graduate student. He has developed computer programs for teaching computer work to blind students.—Some customers of nurseryman **Bob Womack** of Watonga, Oklahoma, are surprised to discover that the man who owns the nursery, and transplants, prunes, and otherwise tends the plants they purchase from him, is blind.—**Kathleen Cima** is a psychiatric social worker at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Danville, Illinois.—People are pretty mean these days. While his family was on a camping trip last summer, someone stole the special wheelchair used by **Tony Foley** who suffers from cerebral palsy. The ten-year-old blind lad enjoys the outings with his family but this may put an end to them. Friends and an anonymous donor raised funds for a replacement.—Blind **Deborah McDonald** runs the Thelma J. Hall Boarding House in Louisville, Kentucky, but not for blind people. Her residents—she will not consider them patients—are mentally retarded. She does her best to instill independence in her charges, for Mrs. McDonald thinks that it is

not enough just to have a nice place to stay.—Queen Anne High School (Washington) senior Sheryl Nelson rows as part of the eight-woman team which uses a heavyweight shell.—Another blind athlete is Cheryl Alexander who is part of the track team at McCaskey High School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She competes in the long jump and runs the 880.—Dr. Gilbert McVaugh, director of the Delta Mental Health Center in Jackson, Mississippi, thinks that Connie McPhail, who is his secretary, is first rate.—Kevin Natham, mathematics major at the University of Idaho, enjoys being a ham operator. He should, because his interest led him to join the college ham radio club where he met Connie McLaughlin, to whom he is now engaged.—After her four children reached adulthood, Mrs. Douglas Kendall looked around for something to occupy her time aside from Cub Scout work and activities offered by her church. She is now a highly efficient darkroom technician at Providence Hospital in Seattle, Washington. Her husband is proud of her, and since he was her teacher . . . —Gordon Bennett of Thorp, Washington, took top honors recently in a regular Red Cross First Aid course.—The boys who play for Tom Furbee, who coaches the Babe Ruth League baseball team, at Fairmont, West Virginia, say he treats them all alike, no matter how long their hair and that it doesn't much matter what color they are.—Alvin Blazik is a computer programmer for a center-city insurance conglomerate in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.—For thirty-five years the salesman with the white cane, Ed Casmer, has been selling cars to customers new and old in Detroit, Michigan.—Another school radio station—that at Pennsylvania State—also has a couple of blind operators. They are Steven Sweeney and Lou Kolb.—Phil

Schmidt of Detroit, Michigan, lives in a comfortable home which he built himself and then furnished with paneling, room dividers, desks, tables, chairs, cupboards, all of his own handwork.—Raising prize cactus plants is amateur horticulturalist Randall Eubanks' specialty. He is president of the Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society.—Joseph Garnica and Miss Genevieve Eachus work for the Social Security Administration in St. Louis, Missouri.—Donna Cottrell works in the communications section of the Charleston, West Virginia, Police Department.—Charlene Stinebaker started as an apprentice and today is a full-fledged floral designer. She handles orders and does everything a designer should on the job at Don DeFoe's Flowers in St. Louis, Missouri, where she has been for five years.—Robert W. Klammer teaches speech and drama at Van Horn High School in Kansas City, Missouri, and directs theatrical productions at the Independence Community Theater.—Ron Waldorf works as office clerk and tool tester for Western Electric in Coon Rapids, Minnesota.—Jerry Sanders, union bartender in Seattle, Washington, gets no complaints from his customers.—Harrison Alper is a financial planner for M. H. Deckard and Company in San Francisco.—The Detroit Chapter of the Michigan Federation of the Blind had a good writeup recently in which the members tried to emphasize that blindness is a nuisance and not a handicap.

Blind people have proved they can conduct business with great reliability, but one problem they have is telling one denomination of paper money from another. In a spinoff from National Aeronautics and Space Administration research a private company has announced

a new device that enables the money to "talk" to the blind person and tell him what denomination it is. The device uses a light-sensitive cell, a light source, and an audio oscillator that produces tones. The money to be identified is placed in the device and as it is drawn through and past the photocell, the oscillator sings out a series of tones. These tones vary as the light and dark areas of the bill vary. Each value makes a different series of tones. Tests show that a blind person needs about three hours of training to be able to separate various bills. The Marchak Engineering and Manufacturing Company in Austin, Texas, is producing the device.

The *Observer*, publication of the Montana Association for the Blind, reports that the MAB has conducted two seminars on blindness and one week-long mini orientation program. As a result of these initial contacts arrangements are being made for the program to be offered to student nurses, hospital employees, and other groups. In the few weeks she has been on the job for the Association, Susan Ford has done an outstanding job in organizing and carrying on these programs. The aim is to acquaint the general public with the agencies which serve the blind, the services each offers, and just what blindness is all about.

We are advised that, effective July 1, 1973, the blind individual and the human guide must each purchase a ticket, when travelling via Amtrak. Whereas before, one ticket was for the full fare and one was free, now each ticket costs seventy-five percent of the regular fare.

In Maryland the workshop for the blind is now known as Blind Industries and Services of Maryland. Two staunch Federationists, John McCraw and Georgia Myers, have been appointed trustees of the organization. John is president of our Maryland affiliate and Georgia is that human dynamo from Cumberland. Together they should make real progress. Congratulations to both of them!

HEW Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger has signed final regulations governing state and community programs for older people to help them maintain their independence and live in their own homes as long as possible. Overall objective of the new title III program, authorized by the Older Americans Comprehensive Services Amendments of 1973, is to strengthen and develop at the sub-state or area level a system of coordinated services for older persons. The program also is designed to strengthen state agencies on aging to meet increased responsibilities as the focal point in the state on behalf of the elderly. Each state will divide itself into planning and service areas, to develop and implement area plans. State and area plans must list specific program objectives and priorities, with special attention given to needs of low income, minority, and physically or mentally handicapped older persons. Definitions of social services have been expanded to include special services for the blind and visually handicapped; home health aide services as well as homemaker services; nutrition services which meet standards of title VII, the nutrition program authorized by the Older Americans Act; and to include employment and other services deemed necessary for the general welfare of older persons. Beginning

in fiscal year 1975 state and area agencies will be required to hold public hearings on their plans and state plans will require establishment of advisory committees to Governors, state agencies, and other units, to meet at least quarterly.

Stephen W. Albro of Watertown, Massachusetts, has accepted an appointment at the Carroll Rehabilitation Center for the Visually Impaired as administrator of the Geriatric Adjustment Center. He will specialize in rehabilitation of the elderly blind person. The Carroll Rehabilitation Center was formerly known as the Catholic Guild for All the Blind and was renamed recently in memory of the Reverend Thomas J. Carroll who headed the nonsectarian agency for twenty-four years.

In the closing hours of its 1973 session, the Congress passed a bill providing for a two-step, eleven-percent boost in social security benefits for thirty million retired or disabled workers, widows, and dependent children. The House passed the compromise bill 301 to 13 and the Senate by a vote of 65 to 0. The first seven percent of the increase would come in the checks for April 1974, with the remaining four percent in the July checks. This amounts to an early payment of the cost-of-living advance that would have come in July 1974 and January 1975. The next automatic increase would come in July 1975.

The bill also increases payments to three million blind, aged, and disabled persons under the Supplemental Security Income

plan. Individuals would get an additional \$10 per month in January 1974 for a total of \$140, and couples would get an additional \$15 for a total of \$210, with an additional increase of \$6 for individuals and \$9 for couples in July. Thus, beginning in July 1974 the total monthly SSI payments would be \$146 for individuals and \$219 for couples. Also, SSI recipients would not lose food stamp benefits or Medicare benefits.

Other amendments would delay until December 31, 1974, the implementation of controversial Government regulations regarding social services, and would make technical changes in the Medicare program. The many other remaining amendments proposed by the Senate, and rejected by the Conference Committee, will receive action separately early this year. The President signed the measure on January 3, 1974.

The new president of the NFB of the District of Columbia is Tom Bickford, 6715 Darby Road, Landover, Maryland 20784. Other officers of the D.C. affiliate are: Ken Reed, first vice-president; Alex Zazow, second vice-president; Fred Leader, corresponding secretary; and Vernon Butler, recording secretary.

The following are the new officers of the Greater Long Island Chapter of the NFB of New York State: president, David R. Stayer of Merrick; vice-president, Jack Yelin of Stony Brook; secretary, Doreen DeJong of Babylon; treasurer, Robert Munz of Massapequa.

The Queen City League of the Blind, the Cincinnati affiliate of the NFB of Ohio, has new officers. They are: Jack Masten, president; Paul Dressell, vice-president; Juanita Wood, secretary; Jeanette Galbreath, treasurer.

Pauline Goden, secretary of the Mountain City Area Federation of the Blind, writes that Joseph Perry has succeeded Jack Schumacher as president of the affiliate, which is centered around Altoona, Pennsylvania.

Marilyn Tiede, corresponding secretary of the Johnson County Chapter of the NFB of Kansas, writes as follows: "Recently the Johnson County Chapter of the NFB of Kansas held its elections and new officers elected were: Kenneth R. Tiede, president, 8011 West Eighty-ninth Street, Overland Park, Kansas 66212. He has been a member of the Federation since June. He is 33 years of age, a former groceryman and a former officer in the Jaycees. Ken is also State fundraising chairman. Recording Secretary Linda Carpenter is a student at Kansas State University, a music major and is becoming very active in the Federation. Corresponding Secretary Marilyn Tiede was a secretary before marrying Ken eleven years ago.

"Reelected vice-president was Bill Saillor. Bill works for Kansas Industries for the Blind. Bill Remlinger was reelected treasurer. Bill is a counselor for the Division of Services for the Blind of Kansas and a former mobility instructor."

Breathedsville penal chapter of Jaycees, Incorporated, located in Hagerstown, Maryland, is now equipped to offer its services as a recording unit for the blind. Blind persons wishing to use this service must furnish tapes and copies of desired books and material. Further information regarding this service is available by writing directly to Breathedsville Jaycees, Route 3, P.O. Box 3333, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

From Kansas City, Missouri, comes this note: "Here is the list of officers of the Kansas City Chapter of the NFB of Missouri, newly elected and beginning their terms in January. President, Melanie Rudell; vice-president, Mrs. W. W. Beedle; secretary, Thomas Peterson; treasurer, George Rittgers; corresponding secretary, Roger Dinwiddie."

The Dallas Chapter of the NFB of Texas has been working hard to build membership, public relations, and its treasury, reports Rosa Lee Jones: "We have sold ashtrays, scissors and last year we did have a chili supper and a few small efforts. But now we are four years old; and this year we plan to try something on a larger scale. We are trying to enlarge our group. When we began in 1970 we started out with seven members. Oh, how slowly we seemed to grow. We now have approximately twenty-five members, with prospects of more in our next meeting. We have given out material and we have had some appearances on TV and radio. Our group is an integrated group, with a white president and a colored vice-president. I believe that all of us are firm believers in NFB; I know I am.

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The National Federation of the Blind of California and the Hawaii Federation of the Blind initiated a program of exchange and mutual assistance with the fall convention, October 19, 20, 21, 1973, of the NFB of California held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood. The project got off to a wonderful start with six members of the Hawaii Federation in attendance. Those who made the long journey were Curtis Chong, Toshi Takano, Nora Ota, Gayle Tanabe, Norman Ota, and Amelia Cetrone, HFB's treasurer. Observing the involvement of the NFBC membership soon led to participation by the visitors in committee meetings, general sessions, and other convention activities.

The exchange is meant to acquaint each organization with the ways and means by which each functions and to learn new methods by which to improve. It is hoped that both organizations will benefit from this exchange of experience and communication.

On March 29-30 Rob Turner, president of the NFBC Student Division, and Mike Hingson of the Orange County Chapter will be attending the convention of the Hawaii Federation of the Blind in Honolulu. This will be one more step in establishing closer state-affiliate relations with our Hawaiian counterparts. We expect to continue this exchange project as long as funds of both organizations will permit. Already we are seeing happy results from this interaction.

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